3i Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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have initiated him into the full rights and responsibilities of adult manhood. The ceremony concludes with the appeal to the *Monren hor*, "We were black like crows, now we are white as white paddy-birds, you five men are our witnesses" (Campbell). 881 783

Cicatrization (Sika)

The Santals have some marks looking like vaccination scars on their left-forearms, midway between the wrist and the elbow. These signs seen on the outer side of the forearm, contain an odd number of marks as one, three, five, or nine. It is customary for the male children to wear these *Sika* marks, and the ceremony is generally performed within their twelfth year. 304 881

For cicatrization, they use a rag rolled to a thickness of about an inch and a half and shaped like a candle. An odd number of spots on the forearm are then spat upon, and the improvised candle is then made to stand on the saliva, which slowly burns and scalds the skin. The hands of the boy, who rolls in agony, are caught hold of by two men till the process is finished. Thereafter, the wound is healed by the application of a moss called *Sealom* (a fresh water Alga, *Mongeotea immersa*, West). [152 278]

If you question a Santal as to why they have an odd number of these marks, he will readily answer [801]

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draws from his arm, chest or thigh is mixed with some sun-dried rice until the whole is saturated. The *ojha* then proceeds to scatter the rice on the ground and prays to the spirits to spare the sick man from further interference. He confirms his diagnosis by oracle by examining the patient and in particular by feeling his pulse, and apart from his power with the spirits he has a stock-in-trade that includes many remedies, spells, and also powers of exorcism. This is resorted to at once in certain cases such as snake bite. The *ojha* squats down beside the sick person and takes in his left hand a peacock feather or sometimes one or two twigs from an old broom, and these he passes along the patient's body without touching it, moving from the head to the feet and chanting the correct spells as he does so.

The magician always warns his clients that there is a possibility of error in his diagnosis, for it is the common belief that witches can interfere with the process of divination in order to draw attention away from themselves. Sometimes at an early stage, but usually when the illness persists in spite of all attempts at a cure, the suspicion of witchcraft arises, and a second divination reveals that a witch is at work. Once the suspicion has been voiced the whole village is concerned in the consultation, and the headman walks through the village exclaiming in a loud voice near each house: "Beware, for if the sick man does not get well we shall deal with thee!" More *ojhas* are consulted, and once agreement has been reached that witchcraft is operating, then steps have to be taken to locate the witch. The villagers are as a rule reluctant to proceed to this step and only do so when other measures have failed, for no one can tell in advance whether the witch will be found in his own house or not. At times frivolous accusations of witchcraft are made in order to pay off an old grudge, but the fear of the real thing is very strong. The oil divination has to be confirmed by some other means, one of which is the ordeal of placing twigs in water. Some freshly cut twigs are placed in the mud at the water's edge of a pond and vermilion is placed on them. The twigs represent the various households and spirits, as the drops of oil do in the oil and leaf method. The twig that withers first helps to fix the direction in which the villagers must look for the answer to their suspicions. Another method of divination is to place some rice wrapped in a leaf in a white-ant hill; if the ants attack the rice immediately, then witchcraft is involved.